Ann. Natal Mus. Vol. 30 Pages 9–13 Pietermaritzburg November, 1989

A new species of *Larifuga* Loman from the Cape Province, South Africa (Opiliones: Triaenonychidae)

by

Wojciech Staręga
(Natal Museum, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa)

ABSTRACT

Larifuga avus sp. n. is described from the Langeberg mountains in the Cape Province of South Africa. New distribution records for other species within the genus are also provided.

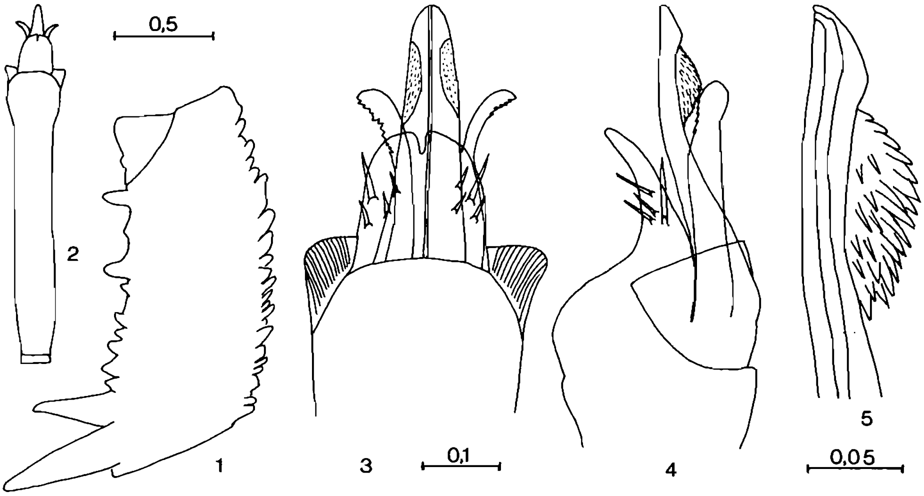
In a small collection of harvestmen which I recently studied through the courtesy of Mr L. N. Lotz of the National Museum in Bloemfontein, there was a single specimen of the genus *Larifuga* Loman, which proved to belong to an undescribed species. Two additional specimens were found amongst unidentified material in the Natal Museum and one in the National Collection of Arachnids, Pretoria.

Larifuga avus sp. n.

Diagnosis. A typical member of the genus, differing from other species in following set of characters: eye tubercle conical, pointed; areae of scutum well defined by transversal rows of distinct granules; first four areae each with one pair of large granules; second cheliceral segment with pointed denticles anteriorly; palpal femur ventrally with two large teeth basally and two small denticles in distal half. Penis structure unique.

Description (♂). Body length: 5,6 mm (holotype), 5,1, 5,4 and 5,6 mm (paratypes). Body brown, small granules black, all appendages brown, slightly lighter than body. Frontal margin with transverse row of small granules; axial granule twice as long as others. In front of eye tubercle 3–5 large granules on each side. Eye tubercle conical, pointed, directed vertically, covered with small granules. All areae with single posteromarginal rows of small granules, only IV with a multiple row and V with an additional broken transversal row. Clusters of granules also at lateral margins and in a chain-like pattern medially on all areae. Areae I–IV each with a paramedian pair of large granules, converging from I to III, and on IV being twice as far apart as on III. Area V with a transversal row of large granules, largest one located medially. Free tergites each with double rows of small granules and single row of large ones.

Genital operculum nearly round, with several minute granules in centre and smooth, shiny frontal margin. All coxae coarsely granulate, I anteriorly with a row of denticles, of which distal one twice as large as others, dorsally with large



1–5. *Larifuga avus* sp. n., holotype: 1. Right palpal femur, mesal view. 2. Penis, ventral view. 3. Tip of penis, ventral view. 4. Tip of penis, lateral view. 5. Stylus, lateral view.

spatulate tooth; II dorsally with similar tooth and retrolaterally with smaller denticles; IV with prolateral small denticles. Coxa III much smaller than others.

Chelicerae: first segment dorsally granulated and with 2–3 distal denticles, second segment anteriorly covered with small pointed denticles. All segments of pedipalps covered with small granules. Trochanter with one tooth ventrally, one denticle mesoventrally and one dorsolaterally. Femur (Fig. 1) ventrally with two very large teeth at base and two denticles on distal half. Patella and tibia unarmed, tibia much thicker than patella (0,76 against 0,62 mm). Tarsus with three denticles on each lateral margin. Length of palpal segments (mm): Tr 0,56, Fe 1,91, Pt 0,88, Ti 1,32, Ta 1,59 (holotype). Legs coarsely granulated, femur I with longitudinal row of 4–6 larger granules dorsally and ventrally. Number of tarsal segments: 4, 18–23 (distitarsus 3), 4, 4.

Penis (Figs 2–5) 1,81 mm long (holotype). Stylus with subapical pillow-shaped 'glands', bearing spiculae. Dorsal plates curved laterad and indented on inner side of curve.

Female unknown.

Material examined. SOUTH AFRICA: *Cape Province:* Langeberg: (1) Grootvadersbosch Forest Station (34°00'S:20°47'E), 20 km WNW Heidelberg, 500 m, indigenous forest, 8–10.xi.1985, J. Doyen, C. Griswold & T. Meikle Griswold—2 ♂ (holotype—NMSA 15325—TN 489; paratype—Senckenberg Museum, Frankfurt a. M.); (2) Grootvadersbos, Heidelberg, in bush, 1.ii.1989, A. Dippenaar—Schoeman—1 ♂ (paratype—NCAP 89/295); (3) Tradouw Pass (33°57'S:20°43'E) near Heidelberg, under plants, 28.x.1987, Entomol. Staff of NMB—1 ♂ (paratype—NMBA 2618).

Etymology. The specific name is a noun in apposition, meaning 'grandfather'. It is derived from the name of the type-locality—Grootvadersbosch (Afrikaans 'grandfather's forest').

The genus *Larifuga* Loman previously included nine species, eight of which were easily identifiable (Kauri 1961) and one of which appeared somewhat 'mysterious' [*L. rugosa* (Guérin)], described a long time ago (inadequately) and never found again. *L. avus* resembles *L. capensis* Lawrence, *L. dentifer* Lawrence, *L. granulosa* Lawrence, *L. mantonae* Lawrence and *L. montana* Lawrence in having a pointed eye tubercle, but differs from them in the following: eye tubercle without denticles, only with small granules (from *L. montana*), areae well defined (from *L. granulosa*), first four areae with one pair of large granules each (from *L. dentifer*), armature of second cheliceral segment and first femur (from *L. capensis* and *L. mantonae*). The shape of eye tubercle and the armature of pedipalps (trochanter and femur) distinguish the new species from *L. calcarata* Lawrence, *L. oneraria* Kauri, *L. rugosa* (Guér.) and *L. weberi* Loman. Moreover, *L. avus* is the only species thus far recorded from the Langeberg mountains.

The available material of *L. avus* has been compared with the following material of *Larifuga* species stored in the Natal Museum, all from the southern Cape Province of South Africa, to which the genus appears to be endemic.

Larifuga calcarata Lawrence, 1931

1. Tsitsikamma Coastal National Park: Stormsriviermond (34°00'S:23°53'E), i. 1961, leg. R. F. Lawrence—4 ♂, 6 ♀, det. R. F. Lawrence, NMSA 7665;
2. same locality, iv.1974, leg. R. F. Lawrence—1 ♂, 2 ♀, det. R. F. Lawrence, NMSA 14465;
3. Nature's Valley (33°58'S:23°33'E), Grootriviermond, ix.1969, leg. R. F. Lawrence—1 ♂, 1 ♀, det. R. F. Lawrence, NMSA 14464.

Larifuga capensis Lawrence, 1931

1. Cape Town, Kirstenbosch (33°59'S:18°26'E)—2 ♀, det. R. F. Lawrence, NMSA 883;
2. Cape Town, Newlands (33°59'S:18°26'E), Fernwood—1 ♀ det. R. F. Lawrence, NMSA 924;
3. Cape Town, Kirstenbosch Gardens (33°59'S:18°26'E), Skeleton Gorge Forest, 200 m, 7.i.1985, leg. C. Griswold—1 ♂, 1 ♀, det. W. Staręga, NMSA 14264;
4. same locality, 200–300 m, 26.x.1985, leg. C. Griswold—1 ♂, det. W. Staręga, NMSA 14265.

Larifuga granulosa Lawrence, 1931

1. Riviersonderend (34°09'S:19°54'E)—1 ♂, syntype, NMSA 14466.

Larifuga mantonae Lawrence, 1934

1. Hogsback (32°36'S:27°01'E), v.1933, leg. S. Manton—1 ♂, 1 ♀, syntypes, NMSA 14467;

2. same locality, x. 1971, leg, R. F. Lawrence—3 ♂, 8 ♀, det. R. F. Lawrence, NMSA 14468.

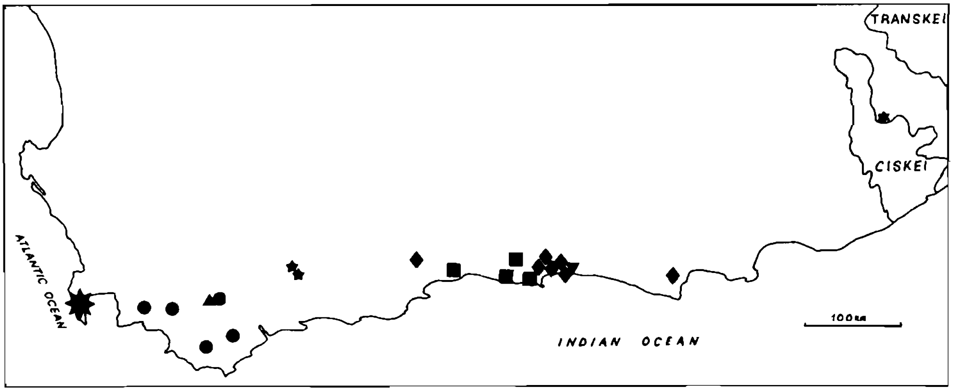
Larifuga montana Lawrence, 1931

1. Cape Peninsula: loc.?—1 ♂, 1 ♀, det. R. F. Lawrence, NMSA 14469.

Larifuga weberi Loman, 1898

1. Knysna (34°02'S:23°02'E), 1932, leg. R. F. Lawrence—2 ♂, 1 ♀, det. R. F. Lawrence, NMSA 1032;
2. same locality, i.1939, leg. W. G. Rump—24 ♂, 23 ♀, 1 j, det. R. F. Lawrence, NMSA 1870;
3. same locality—9 ♂, 5 ♀, 2 j, det. R. F. Lawrence, NMSA 14470;
4. same locality, v.1970, leg. R. F. Lawrence—2 ♂, 2 ♀, det. R. F. Lawrence, NMSA 14471;
5. same locality, 1.xi.1978, leg. J. G. H. Londt & R. M. Miller—1♀, det. W. Staręga, NMSA 8474;
6. Diepwalle Forest Station (33°57'S:23°10'E) NW Knysna, 550 m, indigenous forest, 10–13.i.1985, leg. C. Griswold & T. Meikle Griswold—4 ♂, 8 ♀, det. W. Staręga, NMSA 14260;
7. same locality, 11–13.xi.1985, leg. J. Doyen, C. Griswold & T. Meikle Griswold—5 ♂, 10 ♀, 2 j, det. W. Staręga, NMSA 14261;
8. Krantzhoek (34°05'S:23°13'E), 22 km E Knysna, 200 m, coastal forest, 10.i.1985, leg. C. Griswold & T. Meikle Griswold—4 ♂, 5♀, 1 j, det. W. Staręga, NMSA 14259.

All localities mentioned in the literature (Loman 1898, Lawrence 1931 1934, Kauri 1961) or given above were used to prepare a distribution map (Fig. 6). The records of *L. capensis*, *L. montana* and *L. rugosa* are marked with a common symbol, since the three species appear to be restricted to the Cape Peninsula.



6. Southern portion of the Cape Province of South Africa—distribution of *Larifuga* species: large eight-pointed star—*L. capensis*, *L. montana & L. rugosa* combined, dots—*L. granulosa*, triangle—*L. dentifer*, five-pointed stars—*L. avus*, diamonds—*L. calcarata*, squares—*L. weberi*, inverted triangle—*L. oneraria*, six-pointed star—*L. mantonae*.

REFERENCES

KAURI, H. 1961. Opiliones. *In: South African Animal Life*. Göteborg: Almquist & Wiksell **8**: 9–197.

LAWRENCE, R. F. 1931. The Harvest-spiders (Opiliones) of South Africa. *Ann. S. Afr. Mus.* **29**(2): 341–508.

——— 1934. New South African Opiliones. *Ann. S. Afr. Mus.* **30**(4): 549–586.

LOMAN, J. C. C. 1898. Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Fauna von Süd-Afrika. Ergebnisse einer Reise von Prof. Max Weber im Jahre 1894. IV. Neue Opilioniden von Süd-Afrika und Madagaskar. *Zool. Jb. Abt Syst.* **11**: 515–531, pl. 31.

Date received: 21 October 1988